

Summer Holiday 2020: A Local Offer for children and young people



Children and young people are going to need a unique offer during this summer holiday period 2020.

The Government should plan and fund a Summer 2020 Local Offer. A proactive approach is needed if we're to respond to the experiences of children and young people during lockdown, and the pressure on them and their families.

A varied and engaging offer would support families and give children young people access to safe and enriching activities and time for exercise and sport. This could help get them outside safely, and offer time with other adults and peers, after so much time with immediate family members. It is really important that we respond to the anxiety and uncertainty that young people are facing, and co-ordinate a positive and ambitious offer for Summer Holiday 2020 which helps children and young people get ready to learn in September.

We think that the Government must urgently fund and support Local Authorities (LAs) to co-ordinate a Holiday Local Offer to children and young people in their communities.

As a minimum, this offer should include:-

- School-age children and young people who are eligible for **Free School Meals (FSM)**
- School age children **and young people identified as vulnerable** through joint planning by schools, LAs and other relevant services
- Children and young people with SEND who have carers in need of respite.

These groups of children will have faced particular challenges at home or in terms of accessing a wide range of learning opportunities during lockdown.

Local authorities may wish to extend provision to additional families and where possible should be given the support to do so, in accordance with local capacity and appropriate health and safety risk assessments. Maintaining social distancing will mean limits on the number of children involved in schemes and in individual group activities. Clarity is therefore also needed about which groups of children and young people are given priority.

Holiday Local Offers should include establishing **summer holiday schemes** during the six-week school summer holidays, focusing on:-

1 Engage.

Activities which children and young people will enjoy and be keen to participate in, to support their well-being and sense of self-belief

2 Exercise.

Outdoor activities such as sport sessions and camps, to counteract the lack of opportunities for physical exercise during lockdown

3 Create.

Creative opportunities such as dance, art, music, science and adventure playgrounds

4 Connect.

Partnerships with local libraries, local museums, galleries or art centres and their education outreach teams

5 Prepare.

An element of personal study support, where the LA can plan volunteer schemes where teachers, youth workers, supply staff, support staff and other professionals could support schemes.

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We think it's important that the **Holiday Local Offer** should include the continued provision of the **FSM scheme** over the course of the summer break, now confirmed by the Government.

The national Government should support LAs through funding the provision of the Offer. The Government needs to support and fund local authorities to:-

1. audit what **local providers, partners and charities** in their area that usually operate summer clubs and adventure playground services/ playschemes can provide.
2. recruit additional staffing and seek volunteers from other services, in relation to putting an Offer together, organised by staff from the LA and other services, and recruit the staffing needed to deliver it
3. advise around social distancing, e.g. for play and adventure playground settings.
4. co-ordinate a Local Offer with local partners and advertise to schools and families

A **Holiday Local Offer** is the only fair and feasible route in establishing summer schemes for children and young people. The Government needs to immediately help LAs to audit and co-ordinate a local offer and to assess what is possible, given social distancing and staff shortages.

As and when Testing and Tracking begins to operate well in a local area and depending on the rate of infection in a local area, local councils will need to decide how children and young people can get outside in supervised situations this summer. Schemes will need to be risk assessed and the LA may need to support relevant local partners to do this.

LAs will need to support existing providers who offer summer clubs because of the complexity around health and safety assessments and social distancing and we think local government requires urgent advice and support from DCMS and the Treasury.

Organisations with a credible track record of holiday provision and outdoor learning such as the Scouts, Guides, Woodcraft Folk, YMCA and YHA may be in a position to contribute to the local offer, but are currently confused about social distancing expectations and when or if they are expected or allowed to resume their operations.

Resourcing LAs to carry out this co-ordination is the fastest way to develop a Local Offer, given the constraints of social distancing. It is LAs that will need to decide which activities it is feasible to plan and offer local children, given public health advice.

Funding should be provided to ensure that those teachers, youth workers, supply staff, support staff and others who volunteer to lend their expertise and make a Local Offer possible can be paid appropriately.

All aspects of the **Holiday Local Offer** should be provided free for families whose children are eligible for FSM as a minimum but a Local Offer could go wider if possible through existing partnerships.

The activities described above would provide a wide range of informal learning opportunities which would be hugely beneficial to children trapped in poverty and their families and this investment is crucial.